

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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S E C R E T USNATO 0452

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJ: MBFR: MEASURES FOR THE FLANKS

VIENNA FOR USDEL MBFR

REF: STATE 17634

SUMMARY: SEVERAL ALLIES, AT JAN 28 SPC MEETING, INCLUDING FLANK COUNTRIES, WELCOMED CONSTRUCTIVE US SUGGESTIONS (REFTEL) FOR MEETING CONCERNS OF FLANKS. NORWEGIAN REP COMMENTED THAT ALLIES WOULD PROBABLY END UP ACCEPTING SOMETHING LIKE US PROPOSAL, AND TURKISH REP DID NOT PRESS STRONGLY FOR DISBANDMENT MEASURE. ITALY AND UK EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER EFFECTS OF TURKISH APPROACH ON EUROPEAN FORCES IN PHASE II. IN PRIVATE MEETING, RUMSFELD ASKED TURKISH PERMREP ERALP TO GIVE HIS SUPPORT TO NEW US SUGGESTIONS.

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END SUMMARY

1. SPC MEETING. AT BEGINNING OF SPC DISCUSSION, GREECE AND NORWAY EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR TURKISH PAPER. GREEK REP STRESSED

TURKISH ARGUMENT THAT ALLIES COULD ASK FOR AN "ASSYMETRICAL" APPROACH TO MEASURES FOR THE FLANKS, JUST AS THEY HAVE DONE FOR REDUCTIONS.

2. ITALIAN REP CALLED FOR A PRUDENT, REALISTIC APPROACH, SINCE THE SOVIETS WOULD CERTAINLY DEMAND RECIPROCITY. THE TURKISH APPROACH COULD CREATE MANY PROBLEMS; EVEN RAISING THE CONCEPT OF "DISBANDMENT" IN PHASE I COULD CREATE A HAZARDOUS PRECEDENT FOR PHASE II REDUCTIONS OF EUROPEAN FORCES. UK REP SAID THAT LONDON WAS STILL STUDYING ERALP LETTER. HIS ONLY PRELIMINARY COMMENT WAS THAT, EVEN IF THE ALLIES ARE ABLE TO OBTAIN A DISBANDMENT OF SOVIET FORCES IN PHASE I, THE SOVIETS WILL USE THIS PRECEDENT TO DEMAND DISBANDMENT OF ALLIED FORCES IN PHASE II. DANISH, DUTCH AND BELGIAN REPS COMMENTED ONLY THAT THE ALLIES SHOULD STUDY THE QUESTION OF SECURITY OF THE FLANKS WITHOUT DELAY. FRG REP RECALLED GERMAN VIEW THAT REDUCTIONS IN THE CENTRAL REGION SHOULD NOT DESTABILIZE THE SITUATION ON THE FLANKS AND THAT STABILIZING MEASURES NEED NOT BE CONFINED IN THEIR APPLICATION TO THE NGA.

3. US REP DREW FULLY ON PARAS 2, 4, 5 AND 6 OF REFTEL. (COMMENT: ARGUMENT IN PARA 3 HAS NOT PROVED EFFECTIVE IN PREVIOUS DISCUSSION WITH THE TURKS AND WE ARE CONCERNED THAT WHILE IT IS NOT LIKELY TO MAKE US CASE MORE CONVINCING, IT IS LIKELY TO LEAD TO PROTRACTED SPECULATIVE DEBATE WITH THE FLANKS. END COMMENT.) US REP REMARKED THAT STATEMENTS BY THE TURKISH REP AND OTHER ALLIES IN VIENNA ABOUT THEIR CONCERNS OVER THE POSSIBLE INCREASED THREAT TO THE FLANKS WOULD ESTABLISH A NEGOTIATING HISTORY WHICH WOULD STRENGTHEN THE CASE FOR THE EVENTUAL TABLING OF AN AGREEMENT PROVISION ON UNDIMINISHED SECURITY, IF THE ALLIES WERE TO DECIDE TO PUT FORWARD SUCH A PROVISION. HE ALSO COMMENTED ON A PERSONAL BASIS THAT AN ALLIED CALL FOR DISBANDMENT OF WITHDRAWN SOVIET FORCES WOULD STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF THOSE IN THE US CALLING FOR DISBANDMENT OF US FORCES.

4. TURKISH REP WELCOMED US STATEMENT AS
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AN ENCOURAGING "FIRST STEP." HE SAID THAT WHAT WAS NEEDED NOW WAS A "POLITICAL DECISION" TO DO SOMETHING FOR THE FLANKS. WHILE THE DISBANDMENT MEASURE PROPOSED BY TURKEY WAS THE MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE FLANKS, HE NOTED US ARGUMENTS, AND HOPED THAT ALLIES WOULD STILL GIVE CONSIDERATION TO OTHER MEASURES. GREEK REP HOPED THAT US POSITION DID NOT AMOUNT TO "ABANDONING" PARA 30, SINCE ALLIES SHOULD NOT ABANDON THESE MEASURES WITHOUT STUDYING THEM. NORWEGIAN REP WAS ENCOURAGED BY US SUGGESTIONS AND THOUGHT THAT ALLIES MAY WELL END UP WITH A PROVISION BASED ON PARAS 17 AND 22 OF CM(73)83. HE WANTED TO POINT OUT, HOWEVER, THAT CONDITIONS ARE DIFFERENT ON THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN FLANKS. HE EXPLAINED THAT, ACCORDING TO OSLO'S ANALYSIS, CATEGORY 2 SOVIET FORCES IN THE LENINGRAD/MILITARY DISTRICT WOULD NEED 4-7 DAYS

TO BE COMBAT READY. IF SOVIETS BRING NEW FORCES INTO THE Leningrad MD, THIS WOULD HAVE AN UNFAVORABLE EFFECT ON THE BALANCE IN THE NORTHERN REGION, SINCE IT WOULD FURTHER REDUCE COMBAT READINESS TIME.

5. US REP RESPONDED TO TURKISH POINT BY SAYING THAT US WAS, IN FACT, SUGGESTING THAT A "POLITICAL DECISION" BE TAKEN. HE ALSO DENIED THAT US WAS "ABANDONING" PARA 30. WASHINGTON REVIEWED THE DISBANDMENT MEASURE PUT FORWARD BY TURKEY, AND HE WOULD REFER TO WASHINGTON ANY FURTHER PROPOSALS ON SPECIFIC MEASURES. HE DOUBTED, HOWEVER, THAT FURTHER TECHNICAL STUDIES OF THESE MEASURES WOULD TAKE ALLIES VERY FAR.

6. RUMSFELD-ARALP MEETING. AMBASSADOR RUMSFELD CALLED ON ERALP TUESDAY, DISCUSSED REFTEL, AND ASKED HIM TO GIVE HIS SUPPORT TO THE CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS WHICH WASHINGTON PUT FORWARD.

7. COMMENT: IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS FOLLOWING SPC MEETING, TURKISH REP SAID HE DID NOT EXPECT ANKARA TO BUY THE ENTIRE US POSITION WITHOUT QUALIFICATION. HE THOUGHT ONE POSSIBLE APPROACH MIGHT BE FOR ALLIES TO PURSUE SIMULTANEOUSLY US PROPOSALS AND STUDY OF PARA 30 MEASURES. HE UNDERSTOOD FULLY, HOWEVER, THAT US WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO ACCEPT ANY OF THESE MEASURES AND WOULD PROBABLY LEAVE IT TO OTHER ALLIES TO PUT FORWARD MORE DETAILED PAPERS ON THEM. IN CONNECTION WITH GREEK
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"ASSYMETRY" ARGUMENT, WE TOLD GREEK REP FOLLOWING MEETING THAT TURKISH PROPOSAL WAS NOT TRULY ASSYMETRICAL, SINCE IT OFFERED NOTHING TO SOVIETS IN RETURN FOR DISBANDMENT OF THEIR WITHDRAWN FORCES. RUMSFELD

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